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Winners of Inaugural Democracy Video Challenge Announced

Global Champs Create Stirring Shorts Finishing the Phrase, "Democracy is..."

Washington, D.C. – June 16, 2009 – The world has heard your voice! With the votes counted, the Democracy Video Challenge, a global online video competition, launched by the U.S. State Department in conjunction with leading entertainment organizations, democracy and youth groups, and academia, today unveiled six winners for its inaugural competition. Online voters selected a winner from each region of the world (the Western Hemisphere, Europe, Middle East/North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, South and Central Asia and East Asia Pacific) from over 900 submissions representing 95 countries.

Hailing from various walks of life, and under different political regimes, the participants were asked to complete the phrase, "*Democracy is...*" for a chance to win an all-expense-paid trip to Washington D.C., New York and Los Angeles. The winning videos captured different visions of democracy in today's world and incorporated thought-provoking creative elements, including an animated short about life without free expression to a rap documentary on the importance of sound leadership. To view all the winning videos, please visit: www.youtube.com/democrachallenge.

"Congratulations to winners of the inaugural Democracy Video Challenge, selected by the online voting public," said Judith McHale, Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. "The State Department and our partners created the Democracy Video Challenge as an experiment to generate a global conversation. In doing so, we learned from and heard a global array of impassioned and personalized voices and saw differing visions about the meaning of democracy."

Democracy Video Challenge winners include:

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| • Chansa Tembo from Zambia | • Tsering Choden from Nepal |
| • Aissa Peñafiel from Philippines | • Rodin Hamidi from UAE |
| • Lukasz Szozda from Poland | • Anna Israel from Brazil |

Hernando de Soto, Democracy Video Challenge co-chair and president of the Institute for Liberty and Democracy, said to the winners, "You have proved your talent for influencing people. Your next challenge is to find ways to use it for helping your fellow citizens and the rest of the world, all of us dependent on young, innovative supporters of the democratic way."



About Democracy Video Challenge

The Democracy Video Challenge launched online and at the United Nations on International Democracy Day (September 15, 2008). It invited citizens around the globe to engage in an online dialogue on the nature of democracy by submitting video shorts that completed the phrase “*Democracy is*”

Challenge partners include the Center for International Private Enterprise, the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute, the International Youth Foundation, the Directors Guild of America, The Motion Picture Association of America, NBC Universal, New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts, TakingITGlobal, University of Southern California’s School of Cinematic Arts, the U.S. Department of State, William Morris Endeavor Entertainment, and YouTube.

